

## **COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE**

### **Statement of Purpose**

North Carolina Cooperative Extension - Catawba County Center is a cooperative educational agency sponsored jointly by the United States Department of Agriculture, North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, and Catawba County. It provides Catawba County citizens with scientifically based information and informal educational opportunities focused on local needs and issues in four major areas: Agricultural and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer education, 4-H and Youth, and Community and Rural Development.

### **Outcomes**

#### **Life Skills**

1. Two-hundred fifty youth participating in volunteer-led 4-H clubs will improve their life skills in oral and written communication, citizenship, and leadership as a result of their participation in life skill building programs offered through North Carolina and Catawba County 4-H programs. Completion of project work, presentations, and service in leadership capacities will be used to measure growth using a written survey distributed to 4-H families and leaders.

#### **K-12 Academic Achievement**

2. One-thousand youth will increase their understanding of science and improve critical thinking and analytical skills as a result of participating in 4-H Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs offered through school enrichment, during the after-school setting, or as part of summer programs. Fifty educators will utilize science programming, resources, and training available through North Carolina Cooperative Extension. Programs will be designed to complement the North Carolina science curriculum competencies. Improvement in skills and knowledge will be measured by evaluations provided to parents and school-age child care providers.

#### **Profitable and Sustainable Agriculture Systems**

3. One hundred and twenty-five green industry professionals in the nursery, greenhouse and landscape business will receive professional training from North Carolina Cooperative Extension (NCCE) throughout the year and be encouraged to adopt and use practices associated with Best Management Practices (BMP), ornamental plant selection, innovative production practices, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), alternatives to conventional practices, and environmentally sound practices related to protection of water quality. Those practices related to IPM and BMPs will impact the amounts of pesticides applied to the environment in Catawba County, and will create an

awareness among green industry professionals and employees on being better environmental stewards. Evaluations will be based on implementation of practices adopted and implemented, client self-report and participation in workshops.

4. Twenty additional tracts and/or 1,000 acres of farmland will be enrolled in the Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) Ordinance. Grant funding will be sought to offer assistance to municipalities in developing a Voluntary Agricultural District ordinance for their extraterritorial jurisdiction. If funding is secured an educational workshop and follow-up assistance will be given to town officials in developing an ordinance that will allow interested landowners (with parcels located inside the ETJ) to participate in a VAD program similar to the one adopted by Catawba County.
5. Two-hundred livestock and forage producers will increase their knowledge and implement one or more management practices that will improve farm profitability during Fiscal Year 2010/11. Evaluation methods will include formal surveys of program participants, personal communications with clients to document savings or increased income from practice adoption, participation/attendance in educational programs and financial comparisons of various feeding/marketing methods to determine success. Based on recommendations presented by the Livestock Advisory Committee North Carolina Cooperative Extension will provide educational programming as listed below.
  - a. Improved skills in evaluating feed ingredients with regard to price and quality that will result in lower feed expenses and/or higher production goals for the farm enterprise.
  - b. Improved marketing programs for feeder calves and replacement heifers that will result in increased returns over more traditional marketing methods. The opportunities to market calves through state sponsored graded sales, direct on-farm tele-auction and private treaty will be emphasized this year.
  - c. Youth will improve their livestock management skills through participation in the 4-H livestock program to include livestock judging, skill-a-thon and live animal projects.
  - d. Forage producers will improve the production and utilization of forages on their farms through learning activities such as pasture walks, grazing schools, drill calibration workshops, weed control demonstrations, soil sample evaluations and improved fertility management. Forage management was identified as one of the most likely areas for education and practice adoption by owners of grazing livestock operations.

6. Through the creation of a Hmong farmers' collaborative having strong ties to supporting agencies, such as Cooperative Extension, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 20 Hmong farmers will develop improved skills in the following:

- a. Pricing strategies
- b. Designing & developing farm signs
- c. Marketing & selling with new direct markets
- d. Small livestock production
- e. Post-Harvest, handling, grading, packaging, and food safety security
- f. Composting
- g. Organic production
- h. Fruit tree production
- i. Small fruit production
- j. Pesticide/Insecticide training

This will be accomplished through participation in ten-week growers' school, field demonstrations, mentoring and technical assistance for individual farmers. The measurement of success will include participant surveys, personal success stories, and one-on-one contact.

7. Twenty dairy and other farmers will potentially maximize farm profitability and demonstrate improved knowledge through implementation of one or more of the following farm management practices:

- a. Animal waste and fertilizer management
- b. Soil and plant tissue sampling
- c. Soil conservation practices
- d. Forage/feed analysis
- e. Proper manure application equipment calibration
- f. Record keeping
- g. Maintenance of animal waste operator certification

Evaluations will be based on participation in meetings, workshops, one-on-one assistance, field days, informal feedback, adoption of improved record keeping and business management practices, success stories and economic impacts.

8. Fifty individuals currently active or considering an agricultural enterprise will increase their comfort level in regards to evaluating new enterprise(s), and learning new production and marketing skills. North Carolina Cooperative Extension will hold a series of *"Ten Acre Tuesday"* workshops during the Fiscal Year 2010/11 aimed at supporting part-time, limited resource farmers. Evaluations will be based on pre and post surveys of workshop participants, one-on-one contact, and participation in the Foothills Fresh local foods initiative.

## **Local Food Systems**

9. Five hundred citizens and fifty food service establishments will receive information on the availability of locally produced foods, the nutritional value of eating locally grown produce, meats and eggs, the ease of procurement, and the economic benefits of purchasing direct from the farmer. Achievement will be met through local marketing and advertising efforts for Foothills Fresh, weekly/monthly articles written for local news publications, workshops and meetings. Surveys will be distributed to 550 food service establishments to determine their interest in using local produce. Meetings will be held with interested establishments to connect appropriate producers and consumers. Six week follow-up surveys will determine the number of food service establishments who incorporate the use of locally produced foods into their menus.
10. Sixty field and forage crops producers will learn about technology and management practices to improve farm profitability in one or more of the following areas:
  - a. efficient use of crop nutrients and soil fertility;
  - b. an increased understanding of and application of crop protection tools and improved marketing decision
  - c. Improved disease and insect control that will results in higher production goals and profitability
  - d. Implementing sustainable production practices

Producers will learn this through production meetings, newsletters and workshops. Twenty producers will implement one or more of these practices to improve farm profitability. Evaluation will be based on participation in meetings/workshops, follow-up surveys and one-on-one contact.

11. Thirty livestock producers will learn about rotational/intensive grazing systems through educational workshops and farm tours. They will increase their knowledge on design, management, and benefits of a rotational/intensive grazing system. Ten livestock producers will begin to implement a rotational/intensive grazing system to improve profitability and sustainability. North Carolina Cooperative Extension will assist producers as they incorporate this type of system into their current production. Evaluation will be based on participations in workshops, follow-up surveys and one-on-one contact.

## **Leadership Development**

12. Thirty Catawba County youth will develop an improved sense of responsibility and self-worth by participating in a week-long residential summer camp offered through North Carolina 4-H. North Carolina Cooperative Extension staff will work with local civic organizations to recruit identified youth and award camp scholarships to enable low

income youth to participate. Growth will be measured using parent surveys, testimonies from parents, and observations by camp staff.

13. Thirty high school students reflecting various socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds will improve their skills and gain knowledge to address social problems, issues, and challenges through leadership and volunteerism as a result of their participation in the Catawba County Youth Council. Program progress will be measured through successful completion of local citizenship and community service programs and evaluations completed by students.

### **Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Chronic Disease Risk Reduction**

14. As a result of North Carolina Cooperative Extension programming and with the collaboration of Catawba Valley Medical Center's Center for Diabetes Control, Catawba County Schools, Hickory City Schools, Newton-Conover Schools, Catawba County Wellness Committee, Catawba County Department of Social Services, Catawba County Health Department, Catawba County Health Partners, and others, 90 percent of a projected 250 adults and children will enhance their ability to make healthy food choices, increase physical activity and implement other strategies that will lower their risk for chronic disease. Achievement will be measured by client self-report, written evaluation tools, and other evidence of practice adoption.
15. One hundred food service managers, directors, and owners/operators representing various food service establishments will earn national food safety credentials by completing the *ServSafe* course with 100 percent indicating knowledge gained and more than 50 percent reporting their intention to improve one or more food safety practices. Pre and post-tests and national certification scores will measure results.

### **Parenting and Caregiver Skills**

16. Fifty parents and child care providers will increase their knowledge and skills in providing safer, more nurturing, appropriate environments for pre-school age children as a result of participation in educational opportunities offered by North Carolina Cooperative Extension. Participants will be selected by Children's Resource Center, Parenting Network, HealthFirst Center, child care centers, self-recommendations, and recommendation by other agencies. Evaluation will be based on the number of participants, number of credits awarded, and client reports of changes made as a result of North Carolina Cooperative Extension's programs or resources.
17. As a result of programming efforts, 80 percent of a projected 50 caregiver participants will increase awareness and knowledge, change attitudes, develop skills, and adopt practices and behaviors to provide better care giving. Results will be assessed by pre and post workshop surveys and client self-report.

## **Family Financial Management Skills**

18. One hundred Catawba County youth and adults will participate in money management workshops. Sixty percent of the participants will increase awareness and knowledge while changing their attitudes about making and using money management plans. Change will be demonstrated by the adoption of decision-making practices that will assist participants to achieve family financial goals. Results will be assessed by the pre- and post-workshop surveys and the application of skills.

## **Natural Resources Conservation**

19. Two hundred and fifty residents of Catawba County will gain an increased awareness of litter issues caused by improper solid waste management through educational programming, workshops and events offered by North Carolina Cooperative Extension and other relevant agencies including *Keep Catawba County Beautiful (KCCB)*. A major component of roadside litter in Catawba County is plastic shopping bags. KCCB will promote proper disposal of plastic shopping bags and the use of alternative reusable bags. Evaluation will be based on evidence gathered from Litter Index surveys and Litter Sweeps that show a decrease in the number of plastic bags observed as litter. KCCB volunteers will visit 30 local stores and determine the number of stores that currently offer recycling of plastic bags and encourage the use of reusable bags. Stores that currently recycle will receive a letter thanking them for recycling and a sticker to display on their door that says that they recycle plastic bags. Additionally North Carolina Cooperative Extension (NCCE) and KCCB will engage in research on current trends of municipalities and states banning the use of plastic bags. This data will be beneficial in exploring avenues to ban plastic bags here in Catawba County and North Carolina.
20. Twenty-five Catawba County residents will adopt one or more new or improved waste management practices such as composting and recycling as a result of educational opportunities provided by North Carolina Cooperative Extension and other agencies concerned with proper solid waste management. Achievement will be tracked through success stories reported by clients, written evaluation, and evidence of practice adoption.
21. North Carolina Cooperative Extension in conjunction with *Keep Catawba County Beautiful* will complete two community beautification projects. Projects will involve participation by communities and will strengthen and improve community responsibility. Projects will encourage ownership of the community by the residents which is a very effective way to reduce litter in the community. Documentation of pre and post beautification litter amounts will be used to measure the impact the two projects made in reducing litter for the communities.

## **Urban and Consumer Agriculture**

22. Five hundred citizens will show increased knowledge and awareness of proper plant selection, plant management and/or pest management practices in residential and community landscapes. This outcome will be met through plant clinics, workshops and individual consultations. Evaluation will be based on contact data, success stories presented by clients and written evaluation.
23. One hundred horse owners will increase their knowledge of horse management by participating in programs on weed control and pasture management on horse farms, farm management, disease control and prevention, horse evaluation/selection, hay and feed evaluation and horse waste management.
24. Twenty-five individuals will adopt one or more environmentally sensitive landscaping practices as a result of participating in North Carolina Cooperative Extension's educational programs. Programming will include proper watering and fertilizing methods, erosion control, and landscaping to encourage wildlife. Skills learned will reduce the negative impact of landscaping practices on the environment by minimizing soil and water contamination. Evaluation will be measured by success stories reported by clients, follow-up surveys, and evidence of practice adoption.
25. Fifty residents of Catawba County will gain knowledge of effective practices to conserve and protect ground and surface water as a result of educational programming provided by North Carolina Cooperative Extension. Topics include storm water management, rain gardens and other water conservation methods. Progress will be measured by surveys of participant knowledge increase and intent to implement one of more practices.

# Cooperative Extension Services

## Reinventing Department

Organization: 310050

	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Current	2010/11 Requested	2010/11 Recommended	Percent Change
<b>Revenues</b>					
Federal	\$15,957	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
State	0	20,000	0	0	0%
Local	27,606	27,661	15,626	15,626	-44%
Miscellaneous	5,150	5,150	0	0	0%
From Self Insurance	0	0	0	0	0%
General Fund	277,556	258,414	293,952	296,721	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$326,269</b>	<b>\$311,225</b>	<b>\$309,578</b>	<b>\$312,347</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Personal Services	\$230,937	\$238,443	\$208,919	\$106,466	-55%
Supplies & Operations	95,332	72,782	100,659	205,881	183%
Capital	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$326,269</b>	<b>\$311,225</b>	<b>\$309,578</b>	<b>\$312,347</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Employees</b>					
Permanent	7.80	7.80	6.80	6.80	-13%
Hourly	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.80</b>	<b>7.80</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>-13%</b>

## Fiscal Year 2008/09 Outcome Achievements

Total Outcomes	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved	Success Rate
25	25	0	0	100.0%

## Budget Highlights

The Fiscal Year 2010/11 budget for Cooperative Extension is a slight decrease of approximately \$2,000 compared with Fiscal Year 2009/10. The majority of the decrease involved the Life Skills I and II programs, which lost state funding. As a consequence, the county match to this funding acted as the primary area for Cooperative Extension's reduction, resulting in the elimination of one position.

The budget also reflects a change in the payment process for Cooperative Extension employees. Currently, Cooperative Extension operates under a cost sharing agreement in which the County pays a portion of most employees' salaries and benefits and the State also pays a portion. Beginning November 1, 2010, all Catawba County Cooperative Extension employees will receive paychecks and benefits through the State of North Carolina. As a result, Catawba County will be required to send funds to the State monthly to cover its portion of the salary and benefit costs.

Due to the change in the State-County relationship with regard to Cooperative Extension, the department will no longer be a Reinventing Department effective July 1, 2010. This change will

mean that the budget will not be reviewed based on outcomes and the department will lose the ability to build fund balance to use toward expenditures. Instead, the focus will be on line-item analysis when budgeting. This change resulted in a slight increase in funding for some line-items that used to be covered through the use of the department's Reinventing fund balance. However, ending the reinventing status of Cooperative Extension ensures that the County does not send excess money to the State when the changeover occurs November 1, 2010 and the financial interests of the County are protected to the fullest extent.

### ***Performance Measurement***

#### ***Fiscal Year 2010/11***

Outcomes for this department continue to champion the agency's core purpose of providing citizens with scientifically-based information and informal educational opportunities focused on local needs and issues. The focus remained on the four core areas of the program: agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer education, 4H and youth, and community and rural development.

#### ***Fiscal Year 2009/10***

All the outcomes for Cooperative Extension have been achieved or are being achieved on an ongoing basis, including:

- Accepting applications from 39 landowners to enroll 5,000 acres in the Voluntary Agricultural District Program as of December 2009.
- Increasing the knowledge of 123 livestock and forage producers and having them implement better management practices to improve farm profitability. This has resulted in improved profits in the amount of \$52,800 over the last six months of 2009.
- Increasing the understanding of local government and local issues for thirty-two high school students as a result of participating in the C3 Civics Leadership program and Catawba County Youth Council. All participants reported an increase in knowledge about services provided by local government and 90 percent reported learning more about local issues/trends and careers in government.
- Ensuring prompt, efficient, and courteous service is extended to customers by achieving a 98 percent customer satisfaction rating on a random sample survey administered to North Carolina Cooperative Extension (NCCE) and Catawba County staff, external contractors, vendors and customers utilized by NCCE. A survey will be administered in February 2010.

#### ***Fiscal Year 2008/09***

All of the 25 Cooperative Extension outcomes were achieved. Annual outcomes for this department were developed around the agency's core purpose of providing citizens with scientifically-based information and informal educational opportunities focused on local needs and issues.

A public concern with regard to the landscape industry is the offsite movement of sediment, fertilizers, and pesticides. To address this concern, a series of workshops on landscape IPM and Best Management Practices was held for 75 landscapers and their employees. Ninety-seven percent of surveyed participants increased their knowledge on the prevention and management of pest problems through non-chemical methods. To date, 88 percent of surveyed participants have implemented one or more of the recommended practices resulting in a savings of \$28,010 in chemical and labor costs and resulted in less pesticides being applied to the environment.

Cooperative Extension continues to provide local youth with high quality learning experiences in the 4-H livestock program. During the fall of 2008, 16 local youth participated in livestock judging and skill-a-thon competitions in North Carolina as well as regional and national competitions. Three Catawba County youth participated on a five member state livestock judging team that finished 11<sup>th</sup> nationally with one local youth recognized as 15<sup>th</sup> high scoring individual in the nation.

Forty-three third grade students and their parents and/or guardians participated in North Carolina Cooperative Extension's Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program *Family and Consumer Sciences: Promoting Healthy Eating Across North Carolina* that targeted nutrition, food safety, physical activity, and food budgeting. Outcomes based on pre/post tests results indicate that 60 percent of students improved their overall knowledge of nutrition, and 89 percent made positive behavior change related to nutrition and eating habits. One hundred percent of parent feedback forms indicated that parents thought the program was beneficial for their child, and 100 percent of teachers thought the program was beneficial for the students.

Litter Sweep, a community-wide voluntary clean-up program, had approximately 50 people participate in the fall events and approximately 125 participants during spring events. Moreover, *Keep Catawba County Beautiful* volunteers created a portable educational display to teach about litter and possible solutions. In Fiscal Year 2008/09, they participated in six community events reaching an estimated 2,000 individuals with the "don't litter" message. The display focused specifically on littering of plastic bags and offered helpful solutions to control littering.